

A JOINT MEMORIAL

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH TO CREATE A TASK FORCE TO INVESTIGATE THE ISSUES CONCERNING INSURANCE COVERAGE FOR AND ACCESS TO SCREENING AND DETECTION FOR COLORECTAL CANCER.

WHEREAS, approximately six hundred New Mexico women and men are diagnosed with colorectal cancer each year and nearly three hundred die each year of the disease; and

WHEREAS, colorectal cancer is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the state, following lung cancer; and

WHEREAS, early detection of colorectal cancer has been definitively proven to consistently lower disease-specific mortality, yet most people, including those with private insurance, have not been screened for colorectal cancer; and

WHEREAS, early detection of colorectal cancer is arguably the most powerful underused lifesaving examination available in the United States; and

WHEREAS, increasing access to and use of colorectal cancer screening would save the lives of many New Mexicans; and

WHEREAS, it is the mission of the department of health to improve the health care afforded to all New Mexicans and to reduce the incidence of disease;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO that the department of health be requested to create a task force that includes representatives of the American cancer society, the New Mexico medical society, insurance superintendent, health care practitioners, health care providers and others to investigate the issues concerning insurance coverage of and

access to screening and early detection tests for colorectal cancer in the state; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force be requested to report its findings and recommendations to the appropriate interim committee of the legislature by October 2003; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this memorial be transmitted to the secretary of health.

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